

KYOTO CONSORTIUM FOR JAPANESE STUDIES

SYLLABUS

Semester: Spring 2015

Course Title: *Survey of Modern Japanese Literature: From Meiji to Murakami*

Instructor: Marvin Marcus

Number of meetings per week: 2 Hours per week in class: 3 (2 x 90 mins) Units: 4

Course Description:

This course will provide a comprehensive survey of modern Japanese literature. Our survey, which will move in roughly chronological order, will explore the work of acknowledged authors such as Sôseki, Ôgai, Akutagawa, Kawabata, Tanizaki, Mishima, Ôe, and Murakami, together with lesser-known writers. We will consider key themes that emerge in this literature— the interplay of tradition and modernity, the urban center versus the rural periphery, the contrast of prewar and postwar writing, gender and its various manifestations, and the role of historical fiction in reflecting upon Japan's modern circumstance. We will examine the status of Kyoto and Kansai as literary sites, in contrast to the dominant position assumed by Tokyo.

Our class discussion of selected works will explore the basics of plot, characterization, theme, and narrative voice. Literary theory will be introduced, but not as an end unto itself. We will examine the ever-shifting cultural and political milieu, the War and its aftermath, and recent developments on the literary and cultural scene. Our overall aim will be to enjoy and appreciate the richness of Japan's modern literature, to gain a better understanding of the cultural history of modern Japan, and to understand how the works we read speak to the quality of life in the modern world and to the human condition more broadly conceived.

Classes will be conducted in a lecture-discussion format, with the instructor first commenting on the cultural/ historical/ literary background of the work(s) under discussion and the significance of their author(s). Following these introductory remarks, we will discuss the assigned work(s), keeping in mind the following questions: How is the tale being told? What themes emerge? How do character and plot develop? How is imagery being utilized? How to distinguish between the *local* content that reflects the Japanese context and the *universality* of the characters' situation? *Can* such a distinction be neatly drawn? How do we as readers relate to the characters and their world? And how has the experience of living in Kyoto affected your understanding and appreciation of this literature?

Requirements:

- a) 3 papers (3-4 pp each): 30%
- b) Midterm exam: 20%
- c) Final exam: 30%
- d) Class participation and presentations: 20%

Academic Integrity, Class Conduct

Academic integrity is a serious matter, and students are expected to understand its significance and comply with appropriate standards. In particular, instances of plagiarism will be treated as serious infractions and dealt with accordingly.

Also, please be sure to turn off cell phones and other potentially distracting electronic devices during class time. And note that computer use is restricted to class-related tasks.

Attendance is mandatory; if you are unable to be present, please let the instructor know in advance if at all possible. Unexcused absences will be subject to a grading penalty.

Textbooks: (Note: Some titles may not be available, in which case the material will be provided via pdf or by other means. Additional assigned readings will be provided via pdf.)

Abe, Kôbô. *The Woman in the Dunes* (Vintage International, 1991)

Goossen, Theodore (ed). *The Oxford Book of Japanese Short Stories* (Oxford, 1997)
[abbrev: JSS]

Gordon, Andrew. *A Modern History of Japan: From Tokugawa Times to the Present* (Oxford, 2014; third edition) [abbrev: MHJ]

Kawabata, Yasunari. *'House of the Sleeping Beauties' and Other Stories* (Kodansha International, 1980)

Keene, Donald (ed). *Modern Japanese Literature* (Grove, 1994) [abbrev: MJL]

Marcus, Marvin. *Japanese Literature: From Murasaki to Murakami* (Association for Asian Studies, *Key Issues in Asian Studies* series, 2014) [abbrev: JL]

Murakami, Haruki. *The Elephant Vanishes: Stories* (Vintage, 2001)

Natsume, Sôseki. *Kokoro* (Dover, 2006)

Ôoka, Shôhei. *Fires on the Plain* (Tuttle, 2009)

Tanizaki, Jun'ichirô. *Seven Japanese Tales* (Vintage, 1996)

Class schedule:

Week:

- 1) Background: On Japan, its literary traditions, and the Tokugawa legacy
Readings: Goring, *Studying Literature* (pdf); Keene MJL, *Introduction* (pp 13-28); Varley JC, pp 140-234; Marcus JL, Chaps 1-4; Sampler of Tokugawa readings by Saikaku and Bashô (pdf)
- 2) Meiji and the transition to modernity: Futabatei Shimei, Higuchi Ichiyô, and Mori Ôgai
Readings: JC pp 235-70; JSS, *Introduction*; JL Chap 5; MJL pp 31-58, 59-69, 70-110, 232-41. pdf readings: Futabatei, *Drifting Cloud (Ukigumo)*, Chs 9, 19); Ôgai, *Dancing Girl (Maihime)*
- 3) Tokyo and its discontents: Urban angst, nostalgia, and literary confession (Nagai Kafû, Shimazaki Tôson, Tayama Katai, and Shiga Naoya)
Readings: MJL pp 134-41, 159-200, 211-31; 261-77; JSS pp 45-51. pdf selections: Katai, *Girl Watcher*; Tôson, *Broken Commandment (Hakai)*, Chs 20-22);
- 4) Natsume Sôseki and the ‘Spirit of the Meiji’
Readings: *Kokoro*; selection of Sôseki’s shorter work, to be announced.
- 5) Historical fiction as window on the modern condition (Akutagawa Ryûnosuke, Mori Ôgai, Inoue Yasushi, and Endô Shûsaku)
Readings: MJL pp 300-332; JSS pp 1-27, 95-102, 206-223, 252-63; pdf selections: Ôgai, three historical tales; Akutagawa, stories.
- 6) Tanizaki Jun’ichirô: A literature of desire and longing
Readings: Tanizaki, *Seven Japanese Tales*. pdf selections: *In Praise of Shadows*; (In’ei raisan), *Arrowroot (Yoshino kuzu)*
- 7) TU: **MIDTERM EXAM**; TH: Modern poetry of the prewar period
Readings: Selection of poetry in traditional and modern styles and voices (pdf)
- 8) The Pacific War and its literary aftermath
Readings: Ôoka Shôhei, *Fires on the Plain*; JSS pp 182-86, 240-51, 351-90
- 9) New voices on the postwar literary scene
Readings: MJL pp 398-428; JSS pp 187-205, 313-33. pdf selections by Yasuoka and Kojima; others TBA
- 10) Divergent visions of modern Japan (I): Yukio Mishima and Kawabata Yasunari
Readings: Kawabata, *House of the Sleeping Beauties*; JSS pp 129-48; MJL pp 429-38.

pdf selections: Kawabata's Nobel essay; Mishima: 'Patriotism;' 'The Priest of Shiga Temple and His Love;' *Confessions of a Mask*, Ch 1.

- 11) Divergent visions of modern Japan (II): Abe Kôbô and Ôe Kenzaburô
Readings: Abe, *Woman in the Dunes*; Ôe, *A Personal Matter*; pdf selections: stories by Abe; Ôe's Nobel essay.
- 12) Murakami Haruki and the Japanese literary postmodern
Readings: Murakami, *The Elephant Vanishes: Stories*; pdf selections: work by contemporary writers and poets, TBA.
- 13) Student reports; course overview

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Birnbaum, Alfred (ed). *Monkey Brain Sushi: New Tastes in Japanese Fiction* (Kodansha International, 1991)

Bolton, Christopher. *Sublime Voices: The Fictional Science and Scientific Fiction of Abe Kôbô* (Harvard, 2009)

Bourdaghs, Michael. *The Dawn That Never Comes: Shimazaki Tôson and Japanese Nationalism* (Columbia, 2003)

Copeland, Rebecca. *Lost Leaves: Women Writers of Meiji Japan* (Hawaii, 2000)

_____, ed. *Woman Critiqued: Translated Essays on Japanese Women's Writing* (Hawaii, 2006)

_____ and Esperanza Ramirez-Christensen (eds). *The Father-Daughter Plot: Japanese Literary Women and the Law of the Father* (2001)

Cornyetz, Nina. *Dangerous Women, Deadly Words: Phallic Fantasy and Modernity in Three Japanese Writers* (1999)

Danly, Robert. *In the Shade of Spring Leaves* (Yale, 1981)

Dilworth, David and Thomas Rimer. *The Historical Literature of Mori Ôgai* (Hawaii, 1977, two volumes)

Fessler, Susanna. *Wandering Heart: The Work and Method of Hayashi Fumiko* (SUNY Press, 1998)

- Fowler, Edward. *The Rhetoric of Confession: Shishôsetsu in Early Twentieth-Century Japanese Fiction* (1988)
- Fu, Charles and Steven Heine. *Japan in Traditional and Postmodern Perspectives* (SUNY Press, 1995)
- Fujii, James. *Complicit Fictions: The Subject in the Modern Japanese Prose Narrative* (California, 1993)
- Gabriel, Philip. *Mad Wives and Island Dreams: Shimao Toshio and the Margins of Japanese Literature* (1999)
- Gessel, Van (ed). *The Shôwa Anthology: Modern Japanese Short Stories* (Kodansha International, 1985)
- _____. *The Sting of Life: Four Contemporary Japanese Novelists* (Columbia, 1989)
- Gluck, Carol. *Japan's Modern Myths: Ideology in the Late Meiji Period* (Princeton, 1985)
- Hibbett, Howard (ed). *Contemporary Japanese Literature: An Anthology of Fiction, Film, and Other Writing Since 1945* (Knopf, 1977) .
- Hirata, Hosea. *Discourses of Seduction: History, Evil, Desire, and Modern Japanese Literature* (Harvard, 2005).
- Inouye, Charles. *The Similitude of Blossoms: A Critical Biography of Izumi Kyôka* (1998)
- Ito, Ken. *Visions of Desire: Tanizaki's Fictional Worlds* (Stanford, 1991)
- Ivy, Marilyn. *Discourses of the Vanishing: Modernity, Phantasm, Japan* (1995)
- Karatani Kôjin. *The Origins of Modern Japanese Literature* (Duke, 1993)
- Keene, Donald. *Dawn to the West: Japanese Literature of the Modern Era* (Holt, 1984; 2 vols)
- _____. *The Pleasures of Japanese Literature* (Columbia, 1988)
- _____. *World Within Walls: Japanese Literature of the Pre-Modern Era 1600-1867* (1976)
- Lippit, Seiji. *Topographies of Japanese Modernism* (Columbia, 2002)
- Mack, Edward. *Manufacturing Modern Japanese Literature* (Duke, 2010)
- Maeda Ai. *Text and the City: Essays on Japanese Modernity*; ed. James Fujii (Duke, 2004)

Marcus, Marvin. *Japanese Literature: From Murasaki to Murakami* (Association of Asian Studies, Key Issues in Asian Studies series, 2014)

_____. *Paragons of the Ordinary: The Biographical Literature of Mori Ôgai* (Hawaii, 1993)

_____. *Reflections in a Glass Door: Memory and Melancholy in the Personal Writings of Natsume Sôseki* (Hawaii, 2009)

McClellan, Edwin. *Two Japanese Novelists: Soseki and Toson* (Chicago, 1969)

McDonald, Keiko. *From Book to Screen: Modern Japanese Literature in Film* (Sharpe, 2000)

Miller, Stephen (ed). *Partings at Dawn: An Anthology of Japanese Gay Literature* (Gay Sunshine Press, 1996)

Miller, J. Scott. *Adaptations of Western Literature in Meiji Japan* (Palgrave, 2001)

Minear, Richard. *Hiroshima: Three Witnesses* (Princeton, 1990)

Mitsios, Helen (ed). *New Japanese Voices: The Best Contemporary Fiction From Japan* (Atlantic Monthly Press, 1991)

Miyoshi, Masao. *Accomplices of Silence: The Modern Japanese Novel* (California, 1974)

_____ and H. D. Harootunian (eds). *Postmodernism and Japan* (Duke, 1989)

Molasky, Michael. *The American Occupation of Japan and Okinawa: Literature and Memory* (Routledge, 1999)

Morton, Leith. *Modern Japanese Culture: The Insider View* (Oxford, 2003)

Mostow, Joshua (ed). *The Columbia Companion to Modern East Asian Literature* (Columbia, 2003)

Naff, William. *The Kiso Road: The Life and Times of Shimazaki Tôson* (Hawaii, 2011)

Napier, Susan. *Escape From the Wasteland: Romanticism and Realism in the Fiction of Mishima Yukio and Ôe Kenzaburô* (Harvard, 1995)

Orbaugh, Sharalyn. *Japanese Fiction of the Allied Occupation* (Brill, 2007)

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- _____. *Translating Mount Fuji: Modern Japanese Fiction and the Ethics of Identity* (Columbia, 2007)
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- Wilson, Michiko. *The Marginal World of Ôe Kenzaburô* (1986)
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- Yiu, Angela. *Chaos and Order in the Works of Natsume Sôseki* (Hawaii, 1998)

